

REMARKS

In view of the following remarks, reconsideration and further examination are respectfully requested.

Claims 15, 16, 18-20 and 22 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Swander et al. (U.S. 2005/0022011) in view of Morehead et al. (U.S. 2002/0077801) and Pandya et al.(U.S. 7,260,635). Further, claims 17 and 21 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Swander in view of Morehead, Pandya and Jacobi et al. (U.S. 6,996,818). These rejections are believed clearly inapplicable to claims 15-22 for the following reasons.

Applicants submit that the Swander reference is not prior art against this application because the filing date (i.e., June 6, 2003) of Swander is subsequent to the application's priority date of April 8, 2003. Accompanying this Response is a verified English translation of Applicants' priority document, thereby perfecting the priority date of April 8, 2003.

In view of the foregoing, Applicants respectfully submit that the above-noted rejections of claims 15-22 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a), citing Swander as the primary reference, should be withdrawn.

In view of the above remarks, it is submitted that the present application is now in condition for allowance and an early notification thereof is earnestly requested. The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone to resolve any remaining issues.

Respectfully submitted,

Satoshi ANDO et al.

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